



CHARLES D. BAKER, GOVERNOR

KARYN E. POLITO, LT. GOVERNOR

# INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS

ACTION PLAN MEETING – MAY 25, 2016 – VETERANS COMMITTEE



## MISSION

Continue the work to prevent and end homelessness among veterans and develop a portfolio of housing and services models to meet the needs of all of the Commonwealth's veterans regardless of income, status or eligibility for VA benefits

## WORK TO DATE

- Developed a collaborative partnership with DHCD to clarify veterans preferences and simplify Chapter 115 benefits for rent calculation
- Research the housing and supportive services options for current Grant and Per Diem Transitional Housing program
- Review current process of re-entry for veterans leaving the correctional system – both VA and non-VA eligible veterans
- Initiated a master planning effort to align the long term care, housing and supportive services for veterans at the Chelsea and Holyoke Soldiers Home and maximize these facilities in support of the Commonwealth's veterans.





# PROJECTS COMPLETED

- DHCD will publish new guidance related to veterans preference in state aided public housing – currently under regulatory review within the public housing reform process
- Implemented a joint DVS and DHCD authorization to release information protocol in state aided public and subsidized housing to preserve veterans tenancies.
- Drafted Chapter 115 guidance for rent recalculation in state aided public and subsidized housing to promote simplification of process and insure veterans can maximize state benefits
- Drafted recommendations to develop protocol for a re-entry strategy for veterans who are not eligible for VA benefits.
- Draft master plan for Chelsea and Holyoke in process and under review.



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ONGOING WORK

Continue collaboration with MA housing providers to increase the stock of affordable and accessible housing for veterans including those with disabilities, elders, women and families.

Provide joint guidance to state aided public and subsidized housing agencies, veterans services officers and SSVF providers regarding veterans preferences and chapter 115 rent calculation.

Review Chapter 115 benefit to insure that the program is confluent and not redundant with current federal funding and benefits for veterans

Finalize a protocol of engagement with EOHHS and other agencies to support veterans leaving the criminal justice system who are not eligible for VA benefits – DMH, DPH, DTA, MassHealth and EOLWD.

With federal and state partners, pursue a strategy to re-program or convert current Grant and Per Diem units to models more suited to the needs of all MA veterans seeking housing and services– bridge housing, specialized treatment programming or assisted living and permanent supportive housing.

Initiate stakeholder engagement and finalize master plan for Chelsea and Holyoke



# MEMBERSHIP

1. Secretary Urena, Chair
2. Linn Torto, ICHH, Co-Chair
3. Kevin Casey, Shara Katsos – VA
4. Bob Shumeyko, Stephanie Harrington, HUD
5. Claire Makrinikolas, DVS
6. Ayana Gonzalez, DHCD
7. Joseph Finn, Tom Brigham – MHSA  
(to include in sub-committees Lyndia Downey, PSI and Karen LaFrazia, SFH)
8. Jim Yates, TAC
9. Rose Evans, Gordie Calkins, DHCD
10. VSO's Mike Johns, Steve Connor
11. Donna Brown, Rick Leco, North Attleboro, MA NAHRO
12. Andy McCawley, NECHV
13. Denis Leary, Veterans Inc.
14. Jack Downing, Soldier On
15. John Ratka, VNOC
16. Liz Rogers, Father Bill's  
(to include in sub-committee, Jim Reid, Veterans Transition House)
17. Cheryl Poppe, Soldiers Home Chelsea
18. Bill Edson, Ellen Naughton – Montachusett Veterans
19. Gumersindo Gomez, Puerto Rican Veterans
20. Bob Pulster, USICH
21. Claire Corsini, Dept. of Corrections
22. Laila Bernstein, City of Boston, DND
23. Kelly Dwyer, Health Imperatives